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## Palo Alto Networks Security Operations Professional Sample Questions (Q38-Q43):

### NEW QUESTION # 38

A Security Operations Center (SOC) using Palo Alto Networks (PAN-OS) Next-Generation Firewalls detects an outbound connection from an internal host to a suspicious IP address (192.0.2.10) identified as a Command and Control (C2) server by a newly ingested threat intelligence feed. The feed also indicates this C2 is associated with the 'Cobalt Strike' adversary group. Which of the following immediate actions, primarily driven by threat intelligence, is most critical during the initial Containment phase of incident response?

- A. Conduct a vulnerability scan on the compromised internal host to identify potential entry points.
- B. Update the firewall's WildFire subscription to ensure the latest malware signatures are applied.
- C. Initiate a full packet capture on the firewall for all traffic to and from 192.0.2.10.
- **D. Isolate the internal host from the network using a firewall policy change to block all its outbound connections.**
- E. Notify law enforcement immediately about the detected C2 communication.

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

The Containment phase prioritizes limiting the incident's scope. Threat intelligence about the C2 IP and its association with a sophisticated adversary like Cobalt Strike necessitates immediate isolation of the compromised host to prevent further compromise or data exfiltration. While other options are valuable, they fall under different phases (e.g., Eradication, Analysis, Post-Incident) or are less immediate for containment. A full packet capture (A) is for analysis, WildFire update (C) is proactive, vulnerability scan (D) is for eradication, and law enforcement notification (E) is a later step.

### NEW QUESTION # 39

A global organization uses Cortex XSIAM and has stringent data residency requirements. They operate data centers in regions where XSIAM's cloud-native log ingestion endpoints are not yet available. They need to ingest logs from their on-premise infrastructure, including Windows Event Logs, Linux Syslog, and custom application logs, ensuring all data remains within specific regional boundaries before being processed and analyzed by XSIAM. What is the most appropriate and compliant ingestion architecture for this scenario, and what specific XSIAM components are critical?

- A. Configure all on-premise devices to send logs directly via HTTPS to a regional XSIAM Ingestion API endpoint, relying on network routing to maintain data residency.
- **B. Deploy multiple dedicated Log Collectors within each required regional data center. These Log Collectors will process and normalize logs locally, then forward them to their respective XSIAM tenant, ensuring data residency is maintained at all stages.**
- C. Utilize Cortex XDR Agents on all endpoints and servers, as they inherently store logs locally before forwarding to the nearest XSIAM cloud region.
- D. Implement an on-premise Splunk instance in each region, forward all logs to Splunk, and then use the Splunk Data Exporter to push processed data to XSIAM.
- E. Leverage public cloud providers' regional log aggregation services (e.g., Azure Log Analytics, AWS CloudWatch Logs) and then configure XSIAM Cloud Feeds to pull from these regional services.

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

For strict data residency requirements where XSIAM cloud-native ingestion endpoints are not available in specific regions, the most appropriate and compliant architecture is to deploy dedicated Log Collectors within each required regional data center (Option B). Cortex XSIAM Log Collectors are designed to be deployed on-premise or within private cloud environments. They act as a local aggregation and processing point, ensuring that logs remain within the specified regional boundaries before being securely forwarded to the XSIAM tenant. This architecture explicitly addresses the 'data remains within specific regional boundaries' constraint. XDR Agents (A) forward to XSIAM cloud, not necessarily a specific regional tenant for residency. Direct HTTPS to API (C) might still route through non-compliant regions if the XSIAM endpoint isn't local. Splunk (D) adds unnecessary cost and complexity for what

XSIAM can do natively. Public cloud aggregation (E) means the data resides in a public cloud, which might violate strict on-premise residency requirements.

#### NEW QUESTION # 40

A recent audit revealed that some XSOAR playbooks are performing redundant API calls to a highly rate-limited external service. The team wants to implement a global caching mechanism for this specific service's responses. They decide to use a custom cache where data is stored for 15 minutes. This cache needs to be accessible by multiple playbooks and their embedded scripts. Which of the following approaches is the MOST scalable and maintainable for implementing this shared, time-based caching in XSOAR, considering the distinction between Scripts and Jobs?

- A. Develop a dedicated Python Script, exposed as a command, which handles all calls to the rate-limited service, implements caching in-memory, and is called by other Scripts.
- **B. Create a new XSOAR Integration that wraps the rate-limited service and implements the caching logic internally using XSOAR's built-in key-value store (**
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- C. Implement caching logic within each Script that calls the rate-limited service, storing data in the incident context and clearing it with a scheduled Job.
- D. Modify the XSOAR server configuration to enable an external Redis cache that all Scripts and Integrations can directly access.
- E. Utilize a Job that periodically fetches data from the rate-limited service, stores it in a global XSOAR list, and then Scripts query this list.

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

The most scalable and maintainable approach is to create a new XSOAR Integration (or modify an existing one) that wraps the rate-limited service and implements the caching logic internally. This is because: 1. Integrations are the proper place to abstract external API interactions and manage their state/caching. 2. XSOAR's key-value store (

□ at the integration level, not incident context) provides a persistent, shared storage accessible across multiple executions of the integration commands. 3. This approach centralizes the caching logic, making it reusable by any playbook or script that uses this integration, and ensures proper expiry. Option A is problematic because incident context is per-incident, not global, and clearing it with a Job is inefficient. Option C uses lists, which are not designed for efficient key-value lookups and expiry for caching. Option D is not a standard XSOAR practice for internal caching and introduces external dependencies. Option E (in-memory caching in a script) would not persist across different script executions or even different playbook runs, making it ineffective for a global cache.

#### NEW QUESTION # 41

An insider threat is suspected of exfiltrating sensitive intellectual property. The individual has access to multiple systems, including cloud storage, internal file shares, and local endpoints. Cortex XDR is deployed across all these environments. To build a compelling case for the insider threat investigation, identifying the specific sensitive files accessed, the user account involved, the destination of the exfiltrated data, and the timeline of these actions is critical. Which of the following statements accurately identifies the necessary Cortex XDR data sources and investigative techniques for this scenario? (Select all that apply)

- **A. Leverage Cortex XDR's Data Loss Prevention (DLP) capabilities (if configured) to identify and alert on specific sensitive data patterns being moved or copied, and use UBA to highlight unusual access patterns to sensitive files.**
- **B. Analyze 'file\_write' and 'file\_read' events on local endpoints and network shares, correlated with 'user\_logon' events to identify the specific user account and timestamp.**
- C. Perform deep packet inspection on all network traffic to reconstruct file contents, and then use static malware analysis to determine if any exfiltrated files contained malicious code.
- **D. Examine 'network\_connection' events for large outbound data transfers to unusual destinations or personal cloud storage services, filtering by the suspect user's process IDs.**
- **E. Utilize Cortex XDR's integration with cloud security modules to ingest and analyze cloud storage access logs (e.g., S3 bucket access, OneDrive sync logs) for suspicious uploads or downloads by the suspect user.**

**Answer: A,B,D,E**

Explanation:

This is a multiple-select question. To investigate insider threat data exfiltration: A: 'file\_write' and 'file\_read' events are fundamental for tracking file access and modification on endpoints and shares. Correlating with 'user\_logon' events links these actions directly to the suspect user. B: For cloud storage, Cortex XDR's ability to ingest and analyze cloud security logs (e.g., from AWS, Azure,

Google Cloud) is essential to track uploads/downloads to/from cloud storage services. C: 'network\_connection' events are crucial for identifying the destination of exfiltrated data, especially large transfers to unusual external IPs or known personal cloud services. Filtering by process ID (linked to the user) helps narrow down the relevant connections. E: If Cortex XDR's DLP features are configured, they are designed precisely for this scenario identifying sensitive data movement. UBA helps detect unusual access patterns that deviate from normal user behavior for sensitive files. D: Deep packet inspection for full file content reconstruction is generally not a standard or scalable feature of an XDR platform for every network flow, nor is the primary goal to check for malware in exfiltrated files, but rather the act of exfiltration itself and the content being exfiltrated. While some network sensors might perform DPI, it's not a core XDR function for general exfiltration investigation and is not always feasible for large datasets.

#### NEW QUESTION # 42

A security analyst is building a complex XSIAM Playbook to respond to advanced phishing attacks. The Playbook needs to perform the following steps conditionally: 1. Email analysis: Extract URLs and attachments from the suspicious email. 2. URL reputation check: If a URL is found, check its reputation using a custom threat intelligence source (via a REST API). If the reputation is 'malicious' or 'suspicious', proceed to the next step. Otherwise, mark the incident as low severity and close it. 3. Attachment sandbox analysis: If an attachment is found and the URL reputation (if any) was malicious/suspicious, submit the attachment to an external sandbox. If the sandbox result is 'malicious', automatically block the sender's IP and email address globally. 4. User notification: Notify the affected user and security team about the outcome. Which combination of XSIAM Playbook features and actions are required to implement this conditional logic and integrated response? (Select all that apply)

- A. Utilizing a 'Timer' action to delay the response to allow manual analysis before any automated actions are taken.
- B. Using a 'Generic API/HTTP' action to interact with the custom threat intelligence source, with 'Conditional Branches' based on the API response for URL reputation.
- C. Employing an 'If-Else' action for conditional flow based on attachment presence and URL reputation, leading to either sandbox submission or incident closure.
- D. Leveraging 'Extraction' actions (e.g., 'Extract URLs', 'Extract File Hashes') to parse email content.
- E. Implementing 'Network Blocking' and 'Email Address Blocking' actions based on the sandbox analysis outcome.

**Answer: B,C,D,E**

Explanation:

This question requires a multi-faceted approach to Playbook design. A: 'Generic API/HTTP' action with 'Conditional Branches' : Essential for integrating with custom threat intelligence sources via their REST API and then using the API response (e.g., 'malicious', 'suspicious') to determine the next Playbook path. B: 'Extraction' actions : Crucial for step 1, enabling the Playbook to parse the email for URLs and attachments dynamically. C: 'If-Else' action : Absolutely necessary for implementing the conditional logic in steps 2 and 3. For example, 'If URL found AND reputation is bad' then proceed to sandbox, 'Else' close incident. Another 'If-Else' would be needed for the sandbox result itself. D: 'Network Blocking' and 'Email Address Blocking' actions : These are the direct remediation actions described in step 3, which Cortex XSIAM can perform via integrations with firewalls, email security gateways, etc. E: 'Timer' action : While useful in some Playbooks, it's not a core requirement for implementing the described conditional logic and automated response; it would introduce an unnecessary delay against the immediate response requirement for advanced phishing.

#### NEW QUESTION # 43

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